for amending patent laws before negotiating formal science and technology agreement;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this amounts to encroaching upon the sovereign right of the country; and

(d) whether the Government propose to take up the issue with the World Trade Organisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Train from Howrah to Tikiapara

1333. SHRI MEHBOOB ZAHEDI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of staff/employees working at Tikiapara Yard of Eastern Railway;

(b) whether any steps are being taken to provide shuttle trains from Howrah to Tikiapara for those employees; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) and (c) No Sir, due to operational and technical constraints.

Licences to Hawkers

1334. SHRI BADAL CHOUDHURY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Hawkers given licence for hawking at the Howrah Railway station;

(b) whether the Government are aware that instead of hawking these hawkers are sitting on the platforms and othe space of the station thereby obstructing the movement of the passengers as well as the departmental trollies; and

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) 67 vendors engaged by the private licencees function at Howrah Railway Station.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Steps have been taken to ensure that these vendors do not affect the movement of passengers. These include shifting some of the vendors to North Concourse, but some vendors have filed a Court case and the matter is subjudice.

Running of Trains from Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus

1335. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the public demand that all Konkan Railway trains should run from Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, (C.S.T.);

(b) the inconveniences being faced by the commuters from Kurla Terminus as explained by the commuters; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) to (c) There have been a number of demands to start all Konkan Railway trains from either Dadar or Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus Mumbai. KR-3/KR-4 Passenger is already starting from Dadar and KR-0111/KR-0112 Express from Kurla (T). In view of the burgeoning demand in Mumbai area, the Railways had to develop new terminals like Kurla, Bandra etc. as the facilities at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus Mumbai and Mumbai Central are full saturated. The possibility of extension of all Konkan Railway trains upto Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus Mumbai have been examined but not found feasible due to operational including terminal constraints at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus Mumbai. Kurla is a new terminal which is still under development and hence there are some short-comings which the Railways are trying to make good.

Increase in Frequency of EMU Service

1336. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to increase the frequency of EMU service between Howrah and Bargachia section of South Eastern Railway;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are also considering to introduce shuttle service between Santragachi and Bargachia; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.